

# THE LADY AND THE PIRATE



BY  
EMERSON  
HOUGH

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(Continued.)  
No answer came at first; then "Who is it?" in the voice of Aunt Lucinda. "It is I, Mr. Henry," but I paused. "It is I, Black Bart the Avenger," I concluded. "May I come in?"  
Silently the door opened, and I entered the little reception room which lay between the two staterooms of this cabin. Before me stood Helena. And now I was close to her, I could see the little curls at her temples, could see the double curves of her lips, the color in her cheeks. Ah, she was the same, the same! I loved her! I loved her not the same, but more and more, more!

She held her hands, and all I could do was to stand and stare and then hold out my hand. She took it formally, though her color heightened. I saluted Aunt Lucinda also, who glared at me. "How do you do?" I said to them both, with much originality and daring.  
"Black Bart!" snorted Aunt Lucinda. "What does it mean, from these goings on. What does it all mean?" "It means, my dear Mrs. Deniver," said I, "that I have taken charge of the boat myself."

"But how?" demanded Helena. "We did not hear you were coming. And I don't understand. Why, that rascally little nephew of mine in the mask frightened auntie nearly to death. And he said the most extraordinary things. Where is Mr. Davidson?" she asked. "He didn't tell us a word of this."

"He didn't know a word of it himself," I answered. "Let me tell you, no self-respecting pirate—and, as you see, I am a pirate—in the habit of telling his plans in advance."

## CHAPTER IX.

The Captive Maiden.  
"PIRATE!" cried Helena. I bowed politely. "At your service, Black Bart—my visiting cards are mislaid, but I intend ordering some new ones. The ship's cook, John, will soon be here with tea. These events may have been exciting. May I allow me to present my friend, Parley?"

Parley certainly understood human speech. He now approached Helena slowly and stood looking up into her face in adoration. Then, without any command, he lay down deliberately and rolled over, sat up, backed, and so, having done all his repertoire for her whom he now—as had his master before him—adored at first sight, he stood again and worshipped.

"Nice doggie!" said Helena courteously.

"Have a care, Helena!" said I. "Love my dog, love me. And all the world loves Parley."

The color heightened in her cheeks. I had never spoken so boldly to her before, but had rather dealt in argument than in assertion, which I later, was to learn is no way to make love to any woman.

"When do we get back to Natchez?" she demanded.

"We do not get back to Natchez," "Oh! Then I suppose Mr. Davidson picks us up at Baton Rouge?"

"Ton varlet," said I, "does not pick us up at Baton Rouge."

"New Orleans?"

"Or at New Orleans, unless he is luckier than I ever knew even Cal to be."

"Whatever do you mean?" inquired Aunt Lucinda in tones ominously deep.

"That the Belle Helena is much faster than the tug we left behind at Natchez, even did he find it. He will have hard work to catch us."

"To catch us?"

"Yes, Helena, to catch us. Of course he'll follow in some way. I have, all the way from above Dubuque. Why should not he?"

The ladies looked from me to each other, doubting my sanity, perhaps. "I don't just understand all this," began Helena. "But since we travel only as we like, and only with guests whom we invite or who are invited by the boat's owner, I shall ask you to put us ashore."

"On a sand bar, Helena? Among the alligators?"

"Of course I mean at the nearest town."

"There is none where we are going, my dear Miss Emory. Little do you know what lies before you! Black Bart heads for the open sea. Let your varlet follow at his peril. Believe me, 'twill cost him a very considerable amount of gasoline."

"What right have you on this boat?" she demanded fiercely.

"The right of any pirate."

"Why do you intrude—how dare you—at least, I don't understand!"

"I have taken this ship, Helena," said I, "because it carries treasure—more than you know of, more than I dreamed. My father was a pirate. I am well insured by the public prints. So am I. 'Tis in the blood, but do not anger me. Rather have a cup of tea."

John, my cook, was now at the door with the tray.

"Thank you," rejoined Helena icily. "It would hardly be courteous to Mr. Davidson to use his servants and his table in this way in his absence. Besides—"

"Besides, I recalled that your Aunt Lucinda's aura is always benighted

by a glass or so of ninety-three at about 10:30 of the evening. John!"  
"Lessah!"  
"Go to the left hand locker in B and bring me a bottle of the ninety-three. I think you will find that better than this absurd champagne which I see you varlet has been offering you, my dear Mrs. Deniver. But—excuse me!"  
Helena looked up innocently.  
"A moment before there were six empty bottles on the table there. And I saw you writing. How many have you thrown overboard through the porthole?"

"I didn't know you were so observant," replied Helena demurely. "But only three."

"It is not enough," said I. "Go on and write your other messages for success. Use each bottle, and we shall have more emptied for you if you like. You shall have oil bottles, vinegar bottles, water bottles, wine bottles, all you like. You varlet might run across one floating. It is true. I hope he will. Methinks 'twould bid him speed. But all in vain would be your appeal, for swift must be the craft that can come up with Black Bart now. And desperate indeed must be the man who would dispute his right to tread these decks."

"I hope you are enjoying yourself," said Helena scornfully. "Don't be silly."

"Will you have tea, Helena?" I asked. "Poor, dear Mr. Davidson!" sniffed Aunt Lucinda, taking a glance out of the port into the black night. "I wonder where he is and what he will say."

"I can tell you what he will say, my dear Mrs. Davidson," said I, "but I would rather not."

"Well, I'll tell you what I say," snorted Aunt Lucinda. "I think this joke has gone far enough."

"It is no joke, madam. I was never so desperately in earnest in all my life."

"Then put us ashore at Baton Rouge."

"I cannot, I shall not."

"What do you mean? Do you know what this looks like, the way you are acting, running off with Mr. Davidson's yacht, and this—"

"Yes, madam?"

"Why, it's robbery, and it's—it's—why, it's abduction too. You ought to know the law."

"I do know the law. It is piracy. Have we not told you that resistance would be worse than useless? Haven't I told you I've captured this ship? Little do you know the fate that lies before you, madam, at the hands of my ruthless men if I should prove unable to restrain them! And have a care not to offend Black Bart the Avenger himself! If you do, Aunt Lucinda, he may cut off your evening champagne."

I heard a sudden suppressed sound, wondrous like a giggle, but when I turned Helena was sitting there as sober as Portia, albeit I thought her eyes suspiciously bright.

"Well," said she at length, "we can't sit here all night and talk about it, and I've used up all my note paper and bottles. I'll tell you what I suggest, since you have seen fit to intrude on two women in this way. We will hold a parley tomorrow after breakfast."

"Why not at breakfast?"

"Because we shall eat alone here—alone and I—in our cabin."

"Very well, then, if it seems you are so bitter against the new commander of the ship that you will not sit at the captain's table—as we did the second time we went to Europe together, we three—don't you remember, Helena?"

"Never—at your table, sir!" said Helena Emory, her voice like a stab. And when I bethought me what that had meant before now, that it would mean all my life, if this woman might never sit at board of mine, for one instant I felt the cold thrust of fate's steel. But the next instant a new manner of feeling took its place, an emotion I never had felt toward her before—anger, rage!

"It is well," said I, pulling together the best I could. "And now, by my halldom, or by George, or by anything, you shall be taken at your word. You breakfast here. Be glad if it is more than bread and water—until you learn a better way of speech with me."

Again I saw that same sudden change on her face, surprise, almost fright, and I swear she shrunk from me as though in terror, her hand plucking at Aunt Lucinda's sleeve, whereas all Aunt Lucinda could do was to pluck at her niece's sleeve in turn.

"As to the parley, then," said I, pulling, by mistake, my mask from my pocket instead of my kerchief, "we shall hold it tomorrow, at what time and in what place I please. It'll be seems a gentleman to pain one so far, as we may again remark; but, by heaven, Helena, no resistance!"

"Wait! What do you really mean?" She raised a hand. "I've told you I just can't understand all this. I at ways thought you were a—a—gentleman."

(To Be Continued.)

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## THE HEAVENS IN SEPTEMBER

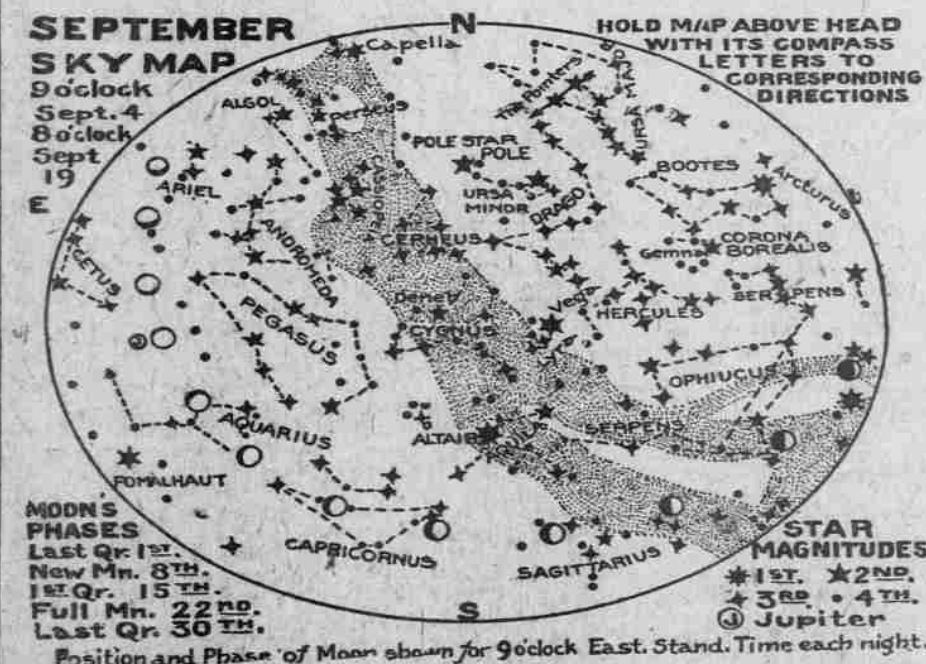
Many First Magnitude Stars Observable—Algol, the Mystery Star; Arc-turus, Antares in Scorpio, Vega, Capella and Altair all Visible—Fomalhaut also.

Three Planets to be seen, Mercury, Venus and Jupiter—Rare chance to observe Mercury, the Elusive—His Peculiar Characteristics—No Planet Between the Sun and Mercury, and Vulcan a Myth.

(By C. S. Brainin, of the Columbia University Observatory Staff.)

Rising majestically in the north-east and well above the horizon at the hour of our map is the great constellation of Perseus—the slayer of the snake-haired Medusa. It is easily located—directly under the large "W" which forms the constellation Cassiopeia.

The second in brightness of the stars in Perseus is Algol, the Demon Star. It marks the forehead of the Medusa. Its behavior was for centuries a mystery, and the mystery remained unexplained till late in the eighteenth century. Algol is a so-called variable star, that is, it changes its brightness and so markedly that it



can be observed under favorable conditions with the naked eye by comparison with the neighboring stars. In about nine hours it changes its magnitude of brightness from the second to the magnitude 3.5 and back again, the entire procedure recurring so often that its period is only about two days and twenty-one hours. The explanation of this phenomenon was first correctly suggested about 130 years ago, but was only actually proven in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. We know, now that Algol is accompanied by a dark companion, which passes between us and the star at regular intervals and shuts off part of the light. It was the spectroscopic which enabled the astronomer to test the correctness of this eclipse theory and actually "see" the phenomenon.

It is interesting to note the large number of first magnitude stars which the observer may enjoy this month. Far in the west is Arcturus, gradually disappearing from our view; and in the southwest the star Antares in Scorpio shows above the horizon. Just past the zenith point is Vega, the brightest star in the northern heavens, while on the meridian to the south is Altair of the constellation Aquila, the Eagle. The big Fomalhaut, blazing red in the southwest at a distance of twenty-one light years from the earth, is considered by some the central star of the universe. Lastly, look close to the horizon in the north northeast and behold Capella, the "Star of Stars."

The Planets.

Three Planets enrich the September sky this year—Mercury, Venus and Jupiter. Of these, Mercury is the one most rarely seen; but this is because of the unfavorable conditions under which he must be observed. Both Mercury and Venus have their orbits between the earth's and the sun and therefore neither can get very far from the sun, so that they can be observed only about the time of sunrise or sunset, because the light of the sun blots them from our view in daytime and they never get far

enough away from the sun to be seen at night. Neither of them can have what astronomers call an opposition, that is, be in a part of the celestial sphere exactly opposite to the sun, with the earth in between. All other heavenly bodies can attain such a position, and this position is the best for observation.

Now, Mercury, the innermost of the planets, gets in an observable position only about six times a year—three times for morning observation and three times for evening. One of these rather rare evening opportunities will be afforded us on Sept. 27th and an evening or two preceding and following that date. Get a position where the horizon is unobstructed, be ready by sundown and watch just above the place where the sun has set. You will have no difficulty in recognizing our brother planet. Venus will also be visible in the west but will be higher up in the sky. Jupiter time be visible all month in the eastern sky in the early evening just below the constellation Pegasus. For the distinguishing of planets from stars we can note that stars twinkle, while planets do not, and that planets in general are likely to appear earlier in the twilight than the fixed stars, since they are with few exceptions, brighter.

Mercury.

It appears from the best recent observations that the planet Mercury rotates once on its axis in about 140 days, making a complete circuit of its orbit, with the result that the same part of its surface, practically, is always turned toward the sun; just as the moon

always turns the same face toward the earth in its rotation around us. Not absolutely the same part is turned toward the sun, owing to libration, or bobbing, like swinging about its axis, due to the eccentricity or ellipticity of its orbit. The face toward the sun is, then, continually heated to a high temperature and the opposite face always sunless and extremely cold. Water could not exist in liquid form anywhere on Mercury, except perhaps, for short periods in the libration area which is not continually exposed to the burning rays of the sun. The presence of a form of life like ours is hardly, therefore, to be imagined on this planet.

The distance of Mercury from the sun is about 36,000,000 miles—it varies 7,500,000 each way—and the intensity of the energy given by the sun to this area of certain size is seven times as great as a like area on the earth would receive. Its diameter is only 3,000 miles and its surface only one-seventh that of the earth. The planet's mass is not so accurately known, but is probably not more than a twentieth of the earth's mass. Owing to its position between the earth and the sun, to the observer with a telescope it shows phases just like the moon's.

Is there a planet between the sun and Mercury? That is a question which occupied the minds of many astronomers of the last century because of a perturbation or disturbance in the orbit of Mercury, which could best be explained by the presence of such a body. Unfortunately for the romance of Astronomy, the question is decided negatively. There may be and probably is a great amount of cosmic matter between Mercury and the sun, but this merely is not added into a large globe which can be added to our list of planets. Yet such a planet has been persistently looked for, several times even reported discovered, and named Vulcan. Careful search during every recent total eclipse of the sun, however, has failed to reveal any such intramercutrial planet, and we are forced to the conclusion that Vulcan is a myth.

## TRUMBULL

An automobile party of 20 local people spent Wednesday at Roton Point. Those who enjoyed the outing were Mr. and Mrs. Francis Wells, Mr. and Mrs. Howard S. Beach, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Christie, Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Beach, Mr. and Mrs. Rollin E. Burton, Mrs. Charles E. Wells, Miss Ethel Everts, Miss Catherine Burton, Arthur Christie, Harold Beach, Miss Lulu Bowker, Maud Ward, Carlton Shepherd, Miss Laura Beach, and Douglas Wilcoxson.

Mrs. Charles N. Shepherd, Miss Merrill Shepherd and Webster Shepherd were guests, Wednesday, of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Scott and Mr. and Mrs. Edward Thornton at Silver Sands.

Mrs. Charles Everts and daughter, Miss Ethel, are visiting in New Milford, the guests of Mr. Everts' parents, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Everts.

The Ladies Aid society will hold a meeting at the home of the vice-president, Mrs. Samuel Ward, Thursday afternoon of next week.

Mrs. Karl Laufer and three children of Long Hill, and Miss Ella M. Ward, Nichols, were guests, Thursday, at the home of Mrs. Edward Ward.

On account of the storm there were no services in the Congregational church, Sunday morning or evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur S. Burr of Danville, Farm, are entertaining Mr. and Mrs. Barber of New York.

Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Ward, William O. Beach and daughter, Miss Mabel, enjoyed a trip to New York, Sunday.

Mrs. Lester Shelton and Mrs. Arthur Plumb, attended the Pomona meeting at Ridgefield.

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